THAT WHICH IS CLAIMED:

1.   A method for selectively allowing a user of a
multi-user system access to a plurality of resources in
5   a network, the method comprising:
      receiving a request originated from the user to
transmit a message over the network to one of the
plurality of resources;
      identifying, from a plurality of security zones, a
10   security zone associated with the one of the plurality
of resources;
      determining if the user is authorized access to
the identified security zone; and
      forwarding the message over the network to the one
15   of the plurality of resources only if it is determined
that the user is authorized access to the identified
security zone.

2.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising the
20   step of associating a security zone with each of the
plurality of resources.

3.   The method of Claim 2, further comprising the
step of specifying the security zones to which users of
25   the multi-user system are authorized access.

4.   The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of
identifying the security zone associated with the one
of the plurality of resources comprises accessing a
30   data structure that specifies the security zone
associated with each resource in the plurality of
resources.

5.   The method of Claim 4, wherein at least one
35   entry in the data structure specifies the security zone

associated with a group of the resources in the
plurality of resources, and wherein identifying the
security zone associated with the one of the plurality
of resources comprises identifying the security zone
5   associated with the most specific entry in the data
structure that includes the resource.

6.   The method of Claim 1, wherein the
identifying and determining steps are performed within
10   the multi-user system.

7.   The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of
determining if the user is authorized access to the
identified security zone comprises querying a security
15   manager of the multi-user system to determine if the
user is authorized access to the security zone
associated with the one of the plurality of resources.

8.   The method of Claim 7, wherein the request to
20   transmit a message is denied if it is determined that
the user is not authorized access to the security zone
associated with the one of the plurality of resources
before any data packets associated with the message are
forwarded over the network.
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9.   The method of Claim 1, wherein the network is
an internet protocol network.

10.   A method for determining whether to allow an
30   operation associated with a user identification
corresponding to a user of a multi-user system that
involves access to a resource in a network, the method
comprising:
classifying the resource as being associated with
35   a security zone from a plurality of security zones;

specifying the security zones from the plurality
of security zones to which the user identification may
have access; and

allowing the operation only if the user
identification is specified as having access to the
security zone associated with the resource.

11.   The method of Claim 10, wherein allowing the
operation only if the user identification is specified
as having access to the security zone associated with
the resource comprises:

identifying the security zone associated with the
resource;

determining if the user identification is
specified as having access to the identified security
zone; and

allowing the operation only if the user
identification is specified as having access to the
security zone associated with the resource.

12.   The method of Claim 11, wherein the
identifying step comprises the steps of:

receiving a request originated from the user
identification to transmit a message over the network
to the resource; and

accessing a data structure to identify the
security zone associated with the resource.

13.   The method of Claim 12, wherein the data
structure specifies the security zone that applies to
at least one group of resources.

14.   A system for selectively allowing a user of a
multi-user system access to a plurality of resources in
a network, comprising:

means for receiving a request originated from the user to transmit a message over the network to one of the plurality of resources;

means for identifying, from a plurality of security zones, a security zone associated with the one of the plurality of resources;

means for determining if the user is authorized access to the identified security zone; and

means for forwarding the message over the network to the one of the plurality of resources only if it is determined that the user is authorized access to the identified security zone.

15. The system of Claim 14, further comprising means for associating a security zone with each of the plurality of resources.

16. The system of Claim 15, further comprising means for specifying the security zones to which users of the multi-user system are authorized access.

17. The system of Claim 14, wherein the means for identifying the security zone associated with the one of the plurality of resources comprises means for accessing a data structure that specifies the security zone associated with each resource in the plurality of resources.

18. The system of Claim 17, wherein at least one entry in the data structure specifies the security zone associated with a group of the resources in the plurality of resources, and wherein the means for identifying the security zone associated with the one of the plurality of resources comprises means for identifying the security zone associated with the most

specific entry in the data structure that includes the
resource.

19.   A computer program product for selectively
allowing a user of a multi-user system access to a
plurality of resources in a network, comprising:
      a computer-readable storage medium having
computer-readable program code embodied in said medium,
said computer-readable program code comprising:
      computer program product means for receiving a
request originated from the user to transmit a message
over the network to one of the plurality of resources;
      computer program product means for identifying,
from a plurality of security zones, a security zone
associated with the one of the plurality of resources;
      computer program product means for determining if
the user is authorized access to the identified
security zone; and
      computer program product means for forwarding the
message over the network to the one of the plurality of
resources only if it is determined that the user is
authorized access to the identified security zone.

20.   The computer program product of Claim 19,
further comprising computer program product means for
associating a security zone with each of the plurality
of resources.

21.   The computer program product of Claim 20,
further comprising computer program product means for
specifying the security zones to which users of the
multi-user system are authorized access.

22.   The computer program product of Claim 19,
wherein the computer program product means for

identifying the security zone associated with the one
of the plurality of resources comprise computer program
product means for accessing a data structure that
specifies the security zone associated with each
5   resource in the plurality of resources.

    23.   The computer program product of Claim 22,
wherein at least one entry in the data structure
specifies the security zone associated with a group of
10   the resources in the plurality of resources, and
wherein the computer program product means for
identifying the security zone associated with the one
of the plurality of resources comprises computer
program product means for identifying the security zone
15   associated with the most specific entry in the data
structure that includes the resource.

    24.   A method for selectively allowing a user of a
multi-user system access to a plurality of resources in
a network, the method comprising:
    receiving a message over the network from one of
the plurality of resources that is addressed to a
process running on the multi-user system that is
associated with the user;
    identifying, from a plurality of security zones, a
security zone associated with the one of the plurality
of resources;
    determining if the user is authorized access to
the identified security zone; and
    forwarding the message to the process only if it
is determined that the user is authorized access to the
identified security zone.